

Improvement of agriculture.

151. * **Mr. M. K. Velu Pillai**: Will the Government be pleased to state the measures adopted by them in 1120 to improve agriculture and the condition of the agriculturists?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: The following measures have been adopted to improve agriculture and the condition of the agriculturists:—

(i) Stocking and sale of large quantities of chemical and organic manures for helping the 'Grow More Food' Campaign.

(ii) Cultural demonstrations on ryots' lands to illustrate the possibilities of augmenting grain yield by using scientific manures, better seeds and improved implements.

(iii) Distribution of selected seeds among the agriculturists for cultivation.

(iv) Manufacture and sale of town refuse and nightsoil compost for augmenting the local production of organic manures.

(v) Adoption of measures for controlling crop pests.

(vi) Propaganda for putting every bit of available land under some food crop or other.

Plantain disease.

152. * **Mr. A. N. Satyanesan**: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) what amount has been spent till the end of Medom 1120 in connection with the cure of plantain diseases;

(b) the area affected by the 'Plantain disease' till the end of 1119; and

(c) the number of plantains that were subjected to destruction on account of 'Plantain disease'?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: (a) Rs. 6,429 chs. 25 c. 6.

(b) About 140 sq. miles.

(c) 3,18,537 till the end of Mithunam 1120.

'Bunchi top' disease.

153. * **Mr. N. Narayana Kurup** (*Karunayapalli, Kartikapalli and Ambalapuzha cum Shertallai*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) the divisions where 'Bunchi top' disease is rampant;

(b) the total acreage affected;

(c) the total number of plantains to be destroyed;

(d) whether the disease is curable; and

(e) whether the 'Bunchi top' disease can be brought under control without destroying the plant?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: (a) Kottayam Division particularly Kottayam taluk.

(b) About 250 sq. miles till the end of Mithunam 1120.

(c) This could be exactly known only after a census of plantains is taken.

(d) and (e) No.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: May I know, whether the import of plantain seedlings from other districts to the affected area is prohibited?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: Yes, Sir.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: May I know how, when all these diseased plantains are cut, they could grow by seedlings if the import is prohibited now?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: Those areas have to be allowed to lie fallow for a period of about a year after complete destruction so that the soil will have been freed of the virus. Thereafter fresh planting can be done.

Scientific cultivation of cocoanuts.

154. *** Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps are taken by the Department of Agriculture for the scientific cultivation of cocoanuts;

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative the nature of the steps taken;

(c) what steps are taken by the Agricultural Department to increase the quantity of production and to improve the quality of cocoanuts;

(d) what is the total yield of cocoanuts in the State for each of the last five years;

(e) what is the average yield of cocoanuts per acre in our State at present;

(f) have they taken notice of the fact that there is a gradual decrease in the average yield of cocoanuts year after year; and

(g) if so, what are the causes of such a steady decrease?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: (a) Yes.

(b) & (c) Use of selected nuts, application of manures, control of insect pests and the conduct of cultural and manurial demonstrations.

(d) The estimated average yield is about 1,125 million nuts per year.

(e) The average yield per acre is between 1500 and 2000 nuts.

(f) No. There is no decrease in yield.

(g) In view of the answer to part (f), this question does not arise.